

Experiences in dealing with aquatic animal disease emergencies in Asia

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ABSTRACT

This paper presents a brief introduction to the disease problems facing aquaculture in Asia and some current efforts to deal with epizootics caused by transboundary aquatic animal diseases (TAADs).

INTRODUCTION

Aquaculture is the fastest growing food-producing sector in the world. A great proportion (over 90 percent) of this production comes from the developing world. In contrast to terrestrial farming systems, where the bulk of global production is based on a limited number of animal and plant species, the aquaculture sector comprises of over 230 different species. This large number of species cultivated reflects the diversity of the sector, particularly the wide variety of candidate species cultivated and the different production systems used. According to the latest Food and Agriculture of the United Nations (FAO) statistics, the contribution of aquaculture to global supplies of fish, crustaceans and molluscs continues to grow, increasing from 3.9 percent of total production by weight in 1970 to 29.9 percent in 2002. Aquaculture continues to grow more rapidly than all other animal food-producing sectors. Worldwide, the sector has grown at an average rate of 8.9 percent per year since 1970, compared with only 1.2 percent for capture fisheries and 2.8 percent for terrestrial farmed meat production systems over the same period. Production from aquaculture has greatly outpaced population growth, with per capita supply from aquaculture increasing from 0.7 kg in 1970 to 6.4 kg in 2002, an average annual growth rate of 7.2 percent.

In 2002, total world aquaculture production (including aquatic plants) was reported to be 51.4 million tonnes by volume and US\$60.0 billion by value. This represents an annual increase of 6.1 percent in volume and 2.9 percent in value, respectively, over reported figures for 2000. In 2002, countries in Asia accounted for 91.2 percent of the production and 82.0 percent of the value. Of the world total, the People's Republic of China produced 71.2 percent of the total volume and 54.7 percent of the total value of

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